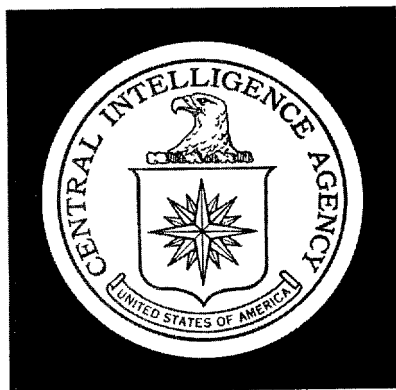


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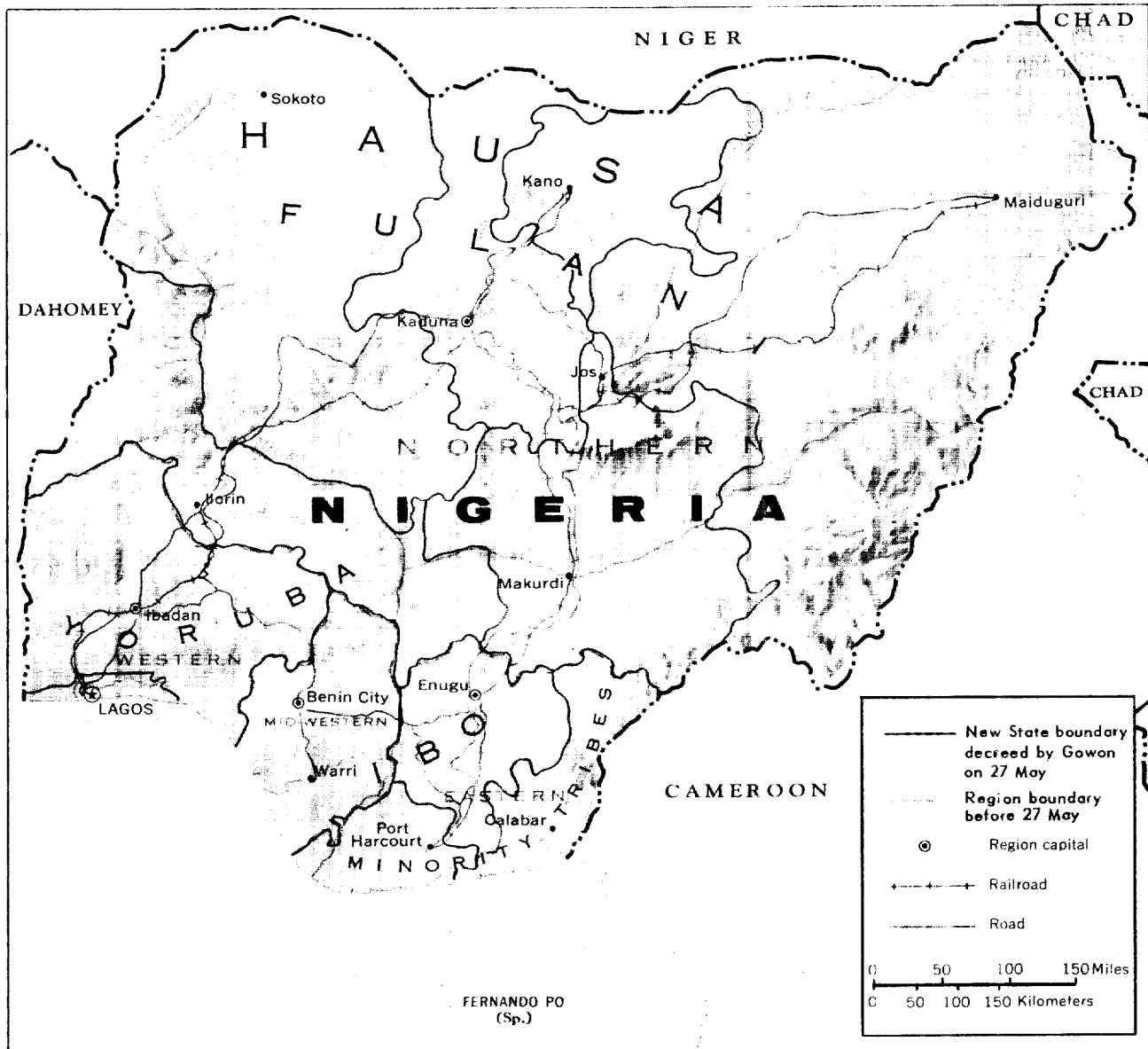
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1. NIGERIA

The formal secession of Eastern Nigeria from the federation on 30 May has increased the danger of hostilities (see map).

Federal forces, totaling some 10,000 troops, appear to be girding for early military action of some kind against the East. Northern hard liners, supported by some Westerners, are demanding such action and federal chief Gowon appears committed. Northern army units along the Eastern border have been reinforced and now total at least 2,000 troops. Despite logistical deficiencies, these forces may attempt to move on Enugu before the impending heavy rains.

Eastern Governor Ojukwu appears to have full control in the "Republic of Biafra"--the name chosen for the East--and has told foreign diplomats that if Lagos attacks he will meet it outside his borders. Ojukwu may command as many as 7,000 regular troops. His forces are short on experienced infantrymen, but would have defensive advantages.

The federal economic blockade of the East could prove troublesome to Ojukwu. So far, at least, Gowon is permitting oil tankers to pick up crude and refined oil from Eastern ports, but Ojukwu now can be expected to demand payment to "Biafra" of oil rents, royalties, and income taxes by the international oil companies--including those of the US. This could trigger an attempt by Gowon to extend his maritime blockade to tankers. Enforcement would be difficult with Lagos' small navy, which has only one destroyer escort and several patrol boats.

Thus far no country has extended recognition to Ojukwu's regime, and most are waiting for the African states to make the first move.

Evacuation of some 700 US dependents from the East to Lagos by air began on 4 June and should be completed in the next day or so. Arrangements are also being made to take out all US dependents from the Mid-Western Region and from the southern portion of the North. Although the British are quietly thinning out their personnel, they are still hoping to avoid a more general evacuation.

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2. VENEZUELA-CUBA-OAS

Venezuela is becoming increasingly frustrated by its inability to marshal support for its stand against Cuban intervention.

Unable to find a co-sponsor for the convocation of a meeting of Western Hemisphere foreign ministers, Venezuela was forced to make the request unilaterally on 1 June. A Venezuelan Foreign Ministry official explained to the US Embassy that the move was made because of President Leoni's impatience with the lack of progress. The President was said to fear that Venezuela was beginning to appear ridiculous in the world press. The Council of the Organization of American States is to consider the request today.

Most Latin American countries are more concerned with their own internal problems than with Cuban subversion, and thus it seems likely that the OAS will be able to agree at best on only a mild denunciation of Cuba. Few countries show any enthusiasm for the Venezuelan position. Even Guatemala, which also faces a Castro-backed insurgency, is reluctant to side strongly with the Venezuelans. The US Embassy in Chile believes that the Chileans are likely to oppose and might not implement a proposed call by the OAS to blacklist firms trading with Cuba.

Venezuelan impatience is causing increased criticism there of the United States' position. Some politicians are alleging that the US lacks determination in facing up to the problems posed by Castro. The secretary for international affairs of the powerful Confederation of Venezuelan Workers has gone so far as to accuse the United States of being indirectly the greatest contributor to the stability of the Castro regime. Thus far, however, the government's attitude toward the US has been restrained.

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3. GUATEMALA

Right-wing vigilante groups organized to combat Communism in Guatemala are becoming increasingly indiscriminate in their selection of targets.

A congressional deputy and member of President Mendez' Revolutionary Party (PR) was murdered on 30 May. Although his killers have not been identified, rumors in Guatemala City point to the strong possibility that military vigilantes are responsible. Death threats to the victim, Marco Soto Beteta, and four other PR deputies late last month have been attributed to the rightists. A PR alternate deputy was killed on 16 May, and other party members in rural areas have been murdered by vigilantes.

Right-wing vigilantism has succeeded in terrorizing Communist elements, disrupting their organization, and driving some into exile. Although innocent persons have been murdered in the process, there has been little evidence to date of popular reaction against the rightists' tactics.

Following Soto's murder, the PR condemned the wave of violence. It declared that the party would put an end to the violence and affirmed that it had sufficient resources to crush those opposed to order and constitutionality. President Mendez, who has tacitly supported the organization of these groups by high-ranking military officers, will now have the difficult task of trying to restrain the vigilantes. If he is unsuccessful and the murder of non-Communists continues, it is possible that Guatemala City could be turned into an armed camp.

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4. HAITI

President Duvalier's most recent series of military and government shake-ups has probably further eroded his power base, a trend that has been evident during the past year. It is by no means clear that any strong grouping is presently ready to take the risk of moving against Duvalier; Ambassador Timmons predicts, however, that "the final act in this drama could come at any time."

At least 16 military officers were arrested in late May. Some held important posts in the elite Presidential Guard, and had ties with Duvalier's ambitious son-in-law, Lt. Colonel Max Dominique, who protested by submitting his resignation to Duvalier. The President has not yet acted upon it. In addition, Duvalier has reshuffled his cabinet for the first time since November 1965, and has replaced a number of government representatives in the provinces. This flurry of activity coincides with a time of increasing financial hardship and international isolation for the regime. One of Duvalier's purposes may have been to try to enhance his regime's foreign image by purging the more notorious thugs from official positions, but it is more likely that his actions were of a purely prophylactic nature.

The situation is further complicated by a bitter feud in Duvalier's family involving, in part, a dispute between Dominique and the other son-in-law, Director of Tourism Luc Foucard. Moreover, Duvalier's overpreoccupation with his mistress has seriously upset his daughter, Dominique's wife. The upshot is that Duvalier is now concerned over the possibility of a palace intrigue involving members of his own family. He also may be concerned, and with good reason, over the loyalty of his new appointments and the possible actions of those he dismissed who have not yet been jailed.

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